



RELIGION 341-43

# CHURCH HISTORY IN THE FULNESS OF TIMES

The History of  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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Dr. Ellis R. Shipp (1847–1939) was born in Iowa and went to Utah in 1853 with her parents.

Dr. Ellis Shipp, herself a plural wife, believed that without polygamy she would never have had the time nor been able to leave her children in the careful care of loved sister-wives to pursue her medical degree. She graduated from medical school in Philadelphia in 1878, becoming the second Utah woman doctor. She also did graduate work at the University of Michigan Medical School.

While mothering her own ten children, Dr. Shipp delivered over six thousand babies in her sixty years of practice. Sister Shipp served as a member of the general board of the Relief Society from 1898 to 1907.

Cragin, and Cullom bills which had their origin in the territory of Utah and were initiated by men who were bitterly opposed to the Church. The Wade Bill initiated in 1866 would have destroyed local government if it had passed. Three years later the Cragin Bill was proposed, but within a few days it was substituted by the Cullom Bill, which was more radical than the Wade or Cragin bills. Members of the Church rose en masse to work for the defeat of the bill. Women of the Church held mass meetings throughout the territory in January 1870 in opposition to the bill.

"While they opposed all the features of the anti-'Mormon' legislation, their action was principally in protest against the measures, and the remarks of would-be reformers, in which the women of the Church were spoken of as being 'down-trodden' and 'degraded' by their husband-oppressors." Opposition by Latter-day Saint women was a great surprise to politicians and suffragettes who saw them as the epitome of suffering and bondage. Newspapers in the East also opposed the bill because of its military features. The president of the United States would have power to send an army to Utah to execute the provisions of the bill. The *New York World* said: "Its execution will assuredly be followed by war."<sup>7</sup> The Cullom Bill was defeated.

In June 1874, however, the Poland Law was passed. This act dismantled Utah's judicial system by giving the United States district courts (controlled by non-Mormon federal appointees) exclusive civil and criminal jurisdiction. Individuals could now be brought to trial for breaking the Morrill Law. Under the Poland Act, jury lists were to be drawn by the district court clerk (a non-Mormon) and the probate judge (a Mormon) in order to give equal representation of members and nonmembers of the Church on juries. Immediately the United States attorney tried to bring leading Church officials to trial but experienced problems. Many of the Brethren had married before the law was passed in 1862 and could not be tried *ex post facto*. Furthermore, the wives could not be required to testify against their husbands, and the records for plural marriage that were kept privately in the Endowment House were not public record.

Church leaders became anxious to have a "test case" brought before the Supreme Court to determine the constitutionality of the anti-bigamy law. So when the U.S. attorney, William Carey, promised to stop his attempts to indict General Authorities during the test case, the First Presidency chose thirty-two-year-old George Reynolds, a secretary in the office of the President, who had recently married a second wife, to stand in for the Church in the courts. Reynolds provided the attorney numerous witnesses who could testify of his being married to two wives. When Carey did not keep his promise and arrested President George Q. Cannon, Church leaders decided that they would no longer cooperate with him.

In 1875 Reynolds was finally convicted and sentenced to two years hard labor in prison and a fine of five hundred dollars (later changed by the United States Supreme Court to imprisonment only). In 1876 the Utah